

Disclaimer: This information is meant to highlight some of the changes in this year's RFP and in no manner does this replace following the instructions and criteria in the RFP for School Year 2014 ("Regular" or Virtual) in its entirety.

Notes from Informational Meeting August 20, 2013

To begin the review of the RFP's, it was stated that they contain more restrictive criteria. It is essential to look at the evaluation criteria and scoring rubric while doing your application.

The following excerpts from the application were highlighted in the review of the RFP's:

Introduction

Virtual Charter School RFP Page 3:

The virtual school must present a plan for weekly, live, synchronous interactive contact between and among instructors and students for all courses designed for middle grades and for all core courses for students enrolled in a high school program;

Related criteria for Virtual Charter School is found under A.2 Academic Program.

A.2 Academic Program

Regular RFP Page 10:

Demonstrate how the curriculum ensures alignment with the state's expectations of learning as stated in Maine's system of Learning Results, MRSA Title 20-A, § 6209 Common Core;

Virtual RFP Page 10-11:

Demonstrate how the school provides instruction of all students in all eight content areas of the system of Maine Learning Results and provides a structure that allows and requires all students to achieve proficiency in the state standards in all content areas of the system of learning results.

Explain how teachers will engage with each student in weekly live (synchronous), interactive contact and provide evidence of such contact.

Describe the school's plan to incorporate in-person social interaction among students and school staff.

Co-curricular and extracurricular programs add value and skills to students' lives and enrich the learning experience. Explain any opportunities for enrichment activities that are included in the application.

A.3. Special Student Populations

Regular RFP Page 11:

Virtual RFP Page 13:

Describe the overall plan to serve students with special needs, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs or Section 504 Plans; English Language Learners; students identified as intellectually gifted; and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.

Regular RFP Page 13:

Virtual RFP Page 15:

Special Education Policies - required Tabs Number 2-9, as with all tabs, essential in your application.

The Special Education Approval Grid can be accessed from Maine Charter School Commission Website: (<http://www.maine.gov/csc/>):

Requests for Proposals / Application Components / Charter School Special Education Program Approval/Monitoring / in document find link for Approval Grid.

For more information regarding Special Student Populations, please contact: Cory King, Educational Specialist, 624-6654 or cory.king@maine.gov.

B. 2 Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Regular RFP Page 17-18:

Virtual RFP Page 19-20:

Describe the plan and timelines for student recruitment and enrollment, including lottery procedures. Explain the plan for student recruitment and marketing that will provide equal access to interested students and families. Specifically describe the plan for outreach to families in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, students of all income levels and other youth at risk of academic failure.

Student recruitment may begin prior to the signing of the charter school contract.

B.6. Parent and Community Involvement

Regular RFP Page 22-23:

Virtual RFP Page 24-25:

Describe how you will engage parents in the life of the school (in addition to any proposed governance roles). Explain the plan for building family-school partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage parental involvement. Describe any commitments or volunteer activities the school will seek from, offer to or require of parents.

Provide evidence of community support for the proposed public charter school, including information on discussions with the school administrative unit where the public charter school will be located concerning recruitment and operations of the public charter school and possible collaboration with nearby school administrative units.

Provide evidence that the proposed charter school has held public meetings in the catchment area for students to share the mission, vision and academic program of the school and has gathered community and local stakeholder feedback through the meetings, email, website or other means.

C.1 Governing Body

Regular RFP Page 24-25:

Virtual RFP Page 25:

The Governing Board must be independent having legal, fiduciary and oversight authority for the charter school with autonomy over key decisions, as referenced in MRS 20-A§ 2401, sections 6, 9A:

6. Governing board. "Governing board" means the independent board of a public charter school that is party to the charter contract with the authorizer and whose members have been elected or selected pursuant to the school's application.

9. Public charter school. "Public charter school" means a public school formed pursuant to this chapter that:

A. Has autonomy over key decisions, including, but not limited to, decisions concerning finance, personnel, scheduling, curriculum and instruction.

Evaluation Criteria:

As stated in the RFPs, an applicant must include proper documentation that the entity proposing to hold the charter is a Maine nonprofit corporation and has filed for status as a charitable organization under Section 501C (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or has received a notice of exemption. The IRS Application for 501C (3) must be included in the application.

A Commission Member explained that the Governing Board oversees the work of the school and it is anticipated that the Board would be hands-on with fundraising.

D.1 Budget

Regular RFP Page 27-28:

Virtual RFP Page 30-31:

Discuss how the charter school will be able to demonstrate a cash reserve by the end of Year 3, sufficient to cover expenses for 2 months or more.

The school's contingency plan to meet financial needs if anticipated revenues are not received or are lower than estimated;

D.3 Facilities

Regular RFP Page 30-31:

Virtual RFP Page 32-33:

If a facility has not been selected, specify potential locations that are under consideration and discuss the process and time line for selecting, acquiring, renovating (if appropriate) and take occupancy of a suitable facility.

In responding, please be sure to respond to all instructions and evaluation criteria.

A clear and compelling demonstration that the school's plan for acquisition and maintenance of a facility is financially viable.

D.4 Transportation

Available from Department of Education is a list with approximate funds for transportation dependent on the resident district of the student.

Note: Application should anticipate that 100 percent of students will use transportation.

Regular RFP Page 32:

Present a thorough, realistic and cost-effective transportation plan by proposed school, including transportation of students with disabilities in the manner required to comply with IDEA;

Virtual RFP Page 34:

Note: A virtual charter school is required to provide, or provide for, transportation services that meet at least the following student needs: transportation to and from a testing site for required state assessments, transportation required to participate in in-person meetings and activities required by the school and transportation required by state or federal law or regulation relating to services to students with disabilities, including, but not limited to, transportation to evaluation appointments and transportation to receive related services under an IEP.

E. Education Service Providers

Regular RFP Page 35:

Virtual RFP Page 37:

All applicants are asked to declare whether they intend to contract with an education service provider (ESP). The term "education service provider" refers to any number of organizations that contract with the Governing Board of a school to provide limited services, except for virtual school providers (see below). The major types of ESPs that serve charters schools are education management organizations (EMOs), charter management organizations (CMOs) and comprehensive school design providers.

For the purposes of this RFP, the Maine Charter School Commission defines an EMO or a CMO as any for- or non-profit corporation or LLC that enters into contract with the entity holding the charter contract to provide significant managerial, technical or financial personnel or services in excess of \$25,000 per year. Similarly, any for- or non-profit corporation or LLC that enters into a contract with the charter school entity that provides instructional materials or services including personnel, in excess of \$25,000 per year shall be considered to be an ESP.

General Comments

Contract Phase (potentially) – March 4, 2014, - June 30, 2014.

Charter School Contract includes:

- Tab 23 – Required Elements Pre-Opening Plan
- Tab 20 – Projected Enrollment Table
- Tab 33 – Budget
- Tab 10 – Performance Indicators Measures Metrics
- Public Charter School Monitoring Plan
- Tab 39 – Closure Plan